

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-9 (Canceled).

10. (New) A device for applying an adhesive tape, comprising a holding mechanism for holding an adhesive tape having an adhesive surface and a back surface opposite to the adhesive surface in a state where the adhesive surface faces outward, the adhesive tape being provided with a profile coinciding with a profile of an objective surface area to which the adhesive tape is to be adhered, and a pressing mechanism for pressing the adhesive tape held by said holding mechanism onto the objective surface area;

wherein said holding mechanism includes a suction member provided with an elastic holding surface capable of making contact with the back surface of the adhesive tape, a base member supporting said suction member shiftably in parallel displacement in a pressing direction transverse to said holding surface, and a vacuum source connected to said suction member and capable of generating a negative pressure adjacent to said holding surface to make said holding surface suck and hold the adhesive tape; and

wherein said pressing mechanism includes a drive section for shifting said suction member in parallel displacement in said pressing direction relative to said base member, to press said adhesive surface of the adhesive tape held by suction on said holding surface onto the objective surface area.

11. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 10, wherein said suction member includes an elastic wall provided with said holding surface and a through-hole opening in said holding surface, a negative pressure chamber formed adjacent to said elastic wall at a side opposite to said holding surface, communicated with said holding surface via said through-hole and connected to said vacuum source, and an elastic column supporting said elastic wall.

12. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 11, wherein said negative pressure chamber includes a plurality of negative pressure regions formed separately from each other, individually communicated with said holding surface and individually connected to said vacuum source, each of said negative pressure regions being provided with said elastic column.

13. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 12, wherein said suction member includes a plurality of suction blocks formed separately from each other, respectively having said negative pressure regions and being combined with each other, said suction blocks being respectively provided with holding surface regions cooperating with each other to define said holding surface.

14. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 13, wherein said plurality of suction blocks are supported on said base member of said holding mechanism in a cooperative arrangement in which said holding surface regions are adjacent to each other and capable of making contact almost entirely with the back surface of the adhesive tape, and wherein said drive section of said pressing mechanism shifts said plurality of suction blocks synchronously in said pressing direction transverse to each of said holding surface regions relative to said base member.

15. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 13, wherein said holding mechanism further includes an intermediate support member for fixedly supporting said plurality of suction blocks and shiftably held on said base member, and wherein said pressing mechanism further includes a guide member for guiding said intermediate support member in said pressing direction on said base member during an operation of said drive section.

16. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 14, wherein said holding mechanism further includes an intermediate support member for fixedly supporting said plurality of suction blocks and shiftably held on said base member, and wherein said pressing mechanism further includes a guide member for guiding said intermediate support member in said pressing direction on said base member during an operation of said drive section.

17. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 12, wherein said vacuum source includes a plurality of vacuum generators independent from each other, individually connected to said plurality of negative pressure regions.

18. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 10, wherein said holding surface of said suction member is constituted as a flat surface or a curved surface, substantially free of twist and step as a whole.

19. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 10, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area.

20. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape as defined by claim 19, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area, under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.

21. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 11, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area.

22. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape as defined by claim 21, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area,

under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.

23. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 12, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area.

24. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape as defined by claim 23, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area, under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.

25. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 13, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area.

26. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape as defined by claim 25, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area, under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.

27. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 14, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area.

28. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape as defined by claim 27, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area, under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.

29. (New) The device for applying an adhesive tape according to claim 18, further comprising a positioning mechanism for positioning said holding mechanism at a predetermined adhering-preparation position in the objective surface area, wherein said positioning mechanism includes a first engagement member fixedly held on said base member, a second engagement member movably held on said base member, and a drive element for moving said second engagement member relative to said base member; said first and second engagement members being fixedly engaged with an article having the objective surface area, under a driving operation of said drive element, to locate said suction member to said adhering-preparation position.